

CITY OF PORTAGE PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, June 1, 2023
7:00 PM Portage
Portage City Hall Council Chamber

The City of Portage Planning Commission meeting of June 1, 2023, was called to order by Chair Corradini at 7:00 p.m.

IN ATTENDANCE

- Biqi Zhao, Deputy Director of Planning and Zoning
- Peter J Dame, Chief Development Officer
- Catherine Kaufman, City Attorney

ROLL CALL

Ms. Zhao called the roll: Chairman Corradini (yes); Vice Chair Joshi (yes); Fries (yes); Pezzoli (yes); Baldwin (yes); Adams (yes); Youngs (yes); Kasper (no); and Freiman (yes).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Minutes dated May 18, 2023.

Motion by Vice Chair Joshi, seconded by Commissioner Baldwin to approve the May 18, 2023 meeting minutes, as submitted. Motion carried 8-0.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. An amendment that modifies the previously-approved Tentative Plan for The Woodlands at Austin Lake Condominiums Planned Development at 4301 Branch Avenue.

Ms. Zhao provided a PowerPoint presentation of the proposed development. She showed the originally-approved Tentative Plan drawing, described overall housing types and density, and indicated later approved changes to the development. She showed various site and neighborhood images, including vacant sites of the proposed future housing changes from duplexes to single-family detached homes. Ms. Zhao indicated that the proposed change for fewer units would result in a slight decrease in density and traffic volume, and that the developer would need to change the Master Deed to reflect the proposed changes. Further, she stated the required public notices for the proposal, including one supporting letter and no opposing comments.

Ms. Zhao concluded her presentation with staff recommendation stating “If no additional public comment is requested and the Commission is supportive of the proposed amendment request for The Woodlands at Austin Lake Condominiums, staff advises the Planning Commission to recommend to City Council the approval of the Tentative Plan Amendment that reduces the overall unit count to 71 units with 27 duplexes (54 attached units) and 17 detached single-family homes.”

The applicant, Bill Patterson, 9309 Sassafrass Trail, Portage, MI, stated he did not have any further comments beyond what was described in Ms. Zhao’s presentation and accepted questions from the Commission.

Commissioner Freiman asked about past stormwater items.

Chair Corradini opened the public hearing.

- William Johnston, 9468 Brianna Trail, spoke to support the proposal.

The public hearing closed by motion supported by Commissioner Youngs, seconded by Commission Baldwin.

Commissioner Fries made a motion for the Planning Commission to recommend to City Council for approval of the Tentative Plan Amendment of The Woodlands at Austin Lake development at 4301 Branch Avenue. Motion supported by Commission Baldwin. Voice vote to approve motion passed 8-0.

2. A Tentative Plan and Rezoning Application (#22/23-9), from OS-1 Office Service and B-1 Local Business Districts to Planned Development (PD) District for a senior housing facility at 732, 810, 830, and 906 E. Centre Avenue.

Ms. Zhao provided a PowerPoint presentation of the proposed development, describing existing and proposed conditions, indicating applicable regulations and permitting procedures. Ms. Zhao showed the existing zoning district and Future Land Use Map of the Comprehensive Plan. She also showed current site pictures of the development area. She stated that part of the project, the applicant also seeks Planning Commission support for an increase in density and reduction in parking spaces. Ms. Zhao provided an analysis indicating no required traffic study, increased buffering, proposed parking lots facing E. Centre Avenue, proposed 1- & 2-story building heights, lower parking/ traffic demand, and staff's support of the increase in density and reduction in parking spaces. She indicated that the project is consistent with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and meets City's housing strategies.

Ms. Zhao concluded her presentation with staff recommendation stating "If no additional information is requested by and the Commission is supportive of the proposed Tentative Plan and Rezoning request, staff advises the Planning Commission to recommend to City Council that the Tentative Plan and Rezoning Application (#22/23-9), from OS-1 & B-1 to Planned Development for a senior housing facility at 732, 810, 830, and 906 E. Centre Avenue be approved."

Commissioner Youngs asked about any existing easements along E. Centre Avenue when the City of Portage acquired ownership and maintenance of E. and W. Centre Avenue from the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County (RCKC). Ms. Zhao stated that she would research the item.

Chair Corradini asked about the existing entrance/ exit associated with the Beacon Pointe Memory Care, the proposed southern drive and location of trash dumpster, and the proposed stormwater basin.

The applicant representative, Joseph Nawrocki, based in Grand Rapids represents Trilogy Health Services, and his civil engineer, Jeff Paulson, representing Hurley & Stewart, 2800 S. 11th Street, Kalamazoo, MI. Mr. Paulson addressed the Commissioner's comments about the easements along E. Centre Avenue, the two access drives for the project, and the proposed private stormwater basin.

Chair Corradini expressed more concerns about the perceived turning access/ movements, traffic accidents, and traffic volume along E. Centre Avenue in the area of the development.

The applicant representative, Mr. Nawrocki, distributed plans to the Commission.

The applicant representative, Mr. Nawrocki, provided a presentation of Trilogy's background, operations, services, and regional facilities within certain Midwestern states. He described the

proposed development, overall operations, deliveries, employees, and communication with adjacent residences. He also showed concept drawings of the development.

Commissioner Pezzoli asked about the storm water and property line change of 906 E. Centre Avenue.

Commissioner Fries asked about ADA-compliant apartments, covered parking spaces, and about whether or not 912 E. Centre Avenue was pursued for purchase for the development. The applicant indicated the apartments will be ADA, the covered parking is first-come, first-serve, and that 912 E. Centre Avenue was not part of the development area.

Commissioner Baldwin asked if an elevator will be provided for second floor access in the case of emergency personnel access. The applicant indicated yes.

Chair Corradini opened the public hearing.

- Andrew Skidmore, 912 E. Centre Avenue, indicated the following concerns: not receiving an invite from the applicant for the applicant's neighborhood meeting, difference in fence height, landscaping near the stormwater basin as additional buffer, parking lot lighting, deliveries, and traffic items; and asked about whether or not the subject site is right for the proposal.

The public hearing was closed by motion supported by Commissioner Baldwin, seconded by Commission Adams.

The applicant addressed public testimony concerns.

Commissioner Pezzoli made motion that the Commission recommend to City Council the approval of the Tentative Plan and Rezoning application No. 22/23-9 from OS-1 Office Service and B-1 Local Business Districts to Planned Development PD for a senior housing facility at 732, 810, 830, and 906 E. Center Avenue. Vice Chair Joshi supported the motion. Voice vote to approve motion passed 8-0.

SITE/FINAL PLANS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

STATEMENT OF CITIZENS

None.

STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONERS/ STAFF

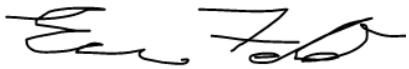
Chair Corradini thanked the Commission for attending Planning Commission meeting and informed the Commission to contact staff of any future absences.

Ms. Zhao indicated a special Planning Commission meeting scheduled for June 28th at 7pm for Master Plan Workshop and other development projects.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Corradini adjourned the meeting at 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Eric Feldt, AICP, CFM
Senior City Planner

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